

DM505-3-M-DT

DESIGN THINKING

TOPIC 4

EMPATHY


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gQdHCHHr0k>

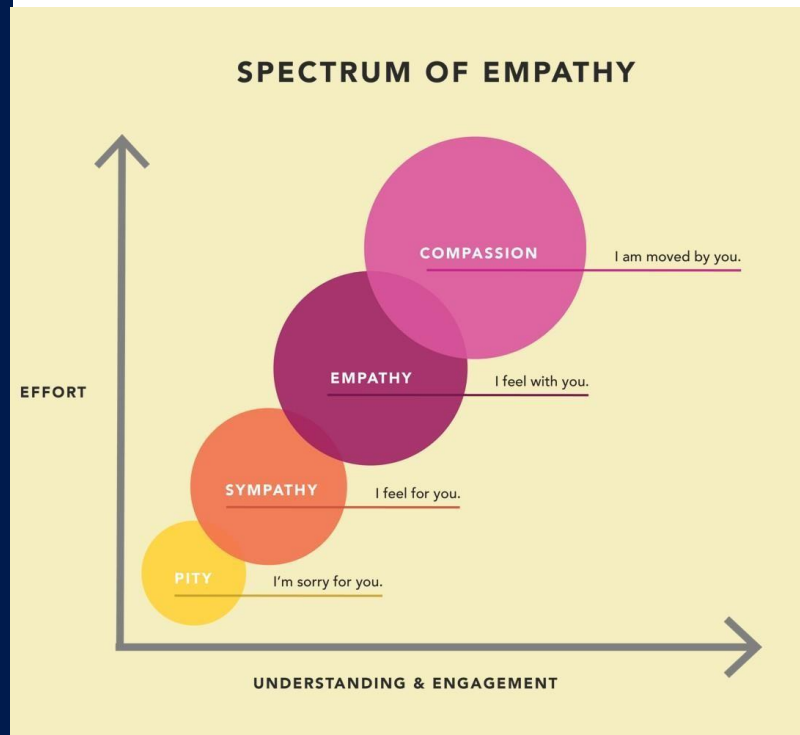
Learning Objectives

At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Apply empathy in Design
- Document problems through empathy
- Discover explicit and latent needs
- Analyse research through observation and listening

Empathy

 **empathy**
 /'empəθi/
 noun
 the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.
 Similar: affinity with rapport with sympathy with understanding of ▼
 Definitions from Oxford Languages



Empathy is a noun that refers to the ability to understand and feel what someone else is feeling, or see the situation from their point of view. The specific emotion that someone who is feeling empathetic feels varies depending on the situation.

One of the most important interpersonal skills that someone can have is empathy, because it can help you connect with that person very easily.

It's late on a Friday night and you're relaxing after a hectic week, binging your favorite TV show when your phone rings. It's a close friend calling in a panic because she's just lost her job. "Don't worry, you'll find another soon," you say, "besides, you knew your company was having financial problems, didn't you expect this? Why are you so upset now?" There's a stunned silence on the other end of the line, followed by a dropped call.



Awaken the mind.

EMPATHY

would this help?



So, what is empathy? It's the ability to understand another person's thoughts and feelings in a situation from their point of view, rather than your own. It differs from sympathy, where one is moved by the thoughts and feelings of another but maintains an emotional distance.

According to psychologists **Daniel Goleman** and **Paul Ekman**, there are three types of empathy: **cognitive**, **emotional**, and **compassionate**.

Three Types of **Empathy**

Cognitive
Empathy



Desire to
Understand

Emotional
Empathy



Desire to
Feel

Compassionate
Empathy



Desire to **Help** &
Support

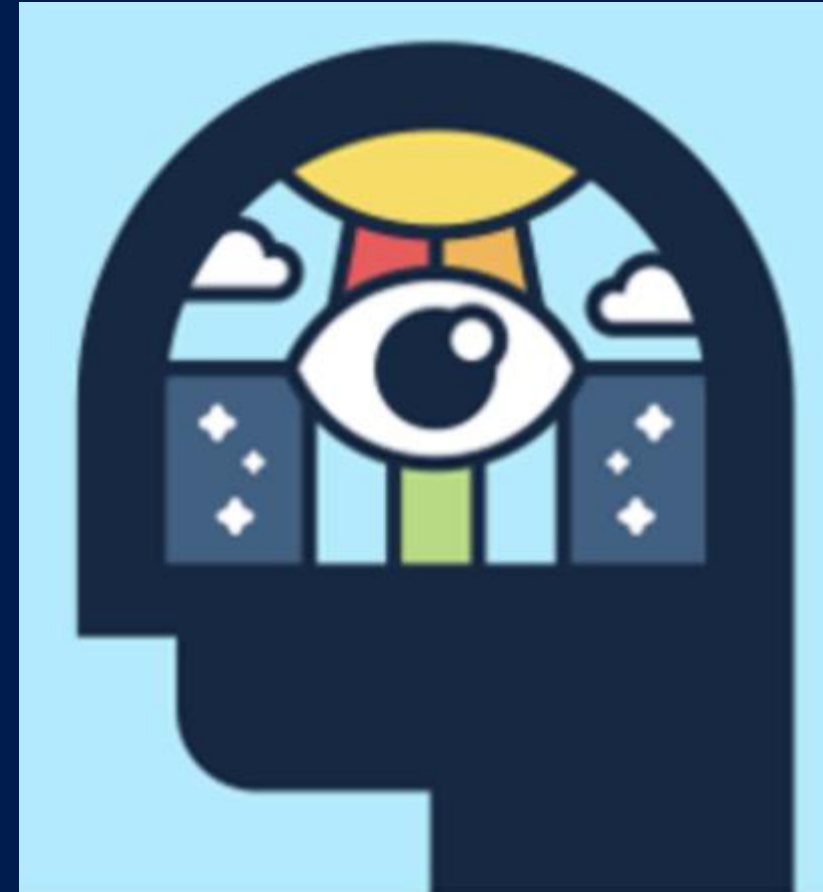


Cognitive Empathy.

Cognitive empathy is the ability to understand how someone else feels and to work out what they might be thinking.

Emotional empathy or Affective empathy.

Emotional empathy refers to the ability to share another person's emotions. This would mean when you see someone else who is sad, it makes you feel sad.



Compassionate Empathy or Empathic Concern.

Compassionate empathy is when you take feelings to actions. It goes beyond understanding and relating to other people's situations, and pushed an individual to do something.





Did you know that **98% of people have the ability to empathize with others?** The few exceptions are psychopaths, narcissists, and sociopaths which are people who are unable to understand or relate to other people's feelings and emotions.

WHY IS EMPATHY IMPORTANT

Empathy is important in almost every aspect of daily life. It allows us to have compassion for others, relate to friends, loved ones, co-workers, and strangers, and it has a large benefit impact on the world.



IN PERSONAL LIFE

How does empathy help in a person's personal life?

Healthy relationships require nurture, care, and understanding. When people only think of their own interests, the other people in the relationships will suffer.

No two people are ever going to think exactly alike, and no two people are going to have the same experiences. Without taking the time to try to relate to one another's feelings and perspectives, people in relationships will likely feel unloved and uncared for.





IN WORK LIFE

In what way is empathy important in the workplace?

For many people, a workplace is a place for teamwork. For things that require a group effort, it's extremely important to take the time to relate to co-workers. Even if people are not specifically working on one project, it is still important to get along with fellow workers.

It is also highly important for management to use empathy. Bosses who lack empathy are likely to subject their employees to unfair practices.

Higher amounts empathy in the workplace have been linked to **increased performance, increased sales, and better leadership abilities.**





FOR THE WORLD

How does empathy impact the world?

Empathy from a global perspective is infinitely important, especially when it leads to compassion. This type of empathy pushes people to dive in and help when there are major disasters.

People are willing to help out others
that they have never met because
they know that they too would
need help if things were reversed.
Without compassionate empathy,
the world would be a much darker
and less functional place to live.



HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR LEVEL OF EMPATHY

While it is easier to train a person from childhood to be empathic, it is also possible for adults to increase their levels of empathy. Below are some ways that will help improve a person's empathy.



READ LITERARY FICTION

Believe it or not, reading fiction can actually increase your empathy. New studies show that when people read fiction, their brains really feel like they're entering a new world.

The reason this discovery matters is because it shows that people are able to identify with people and groups that are actually outside of themselves.

To put this into a non-fantasy application, it shows that people can relate to people who live lives that are entirely different than their own.

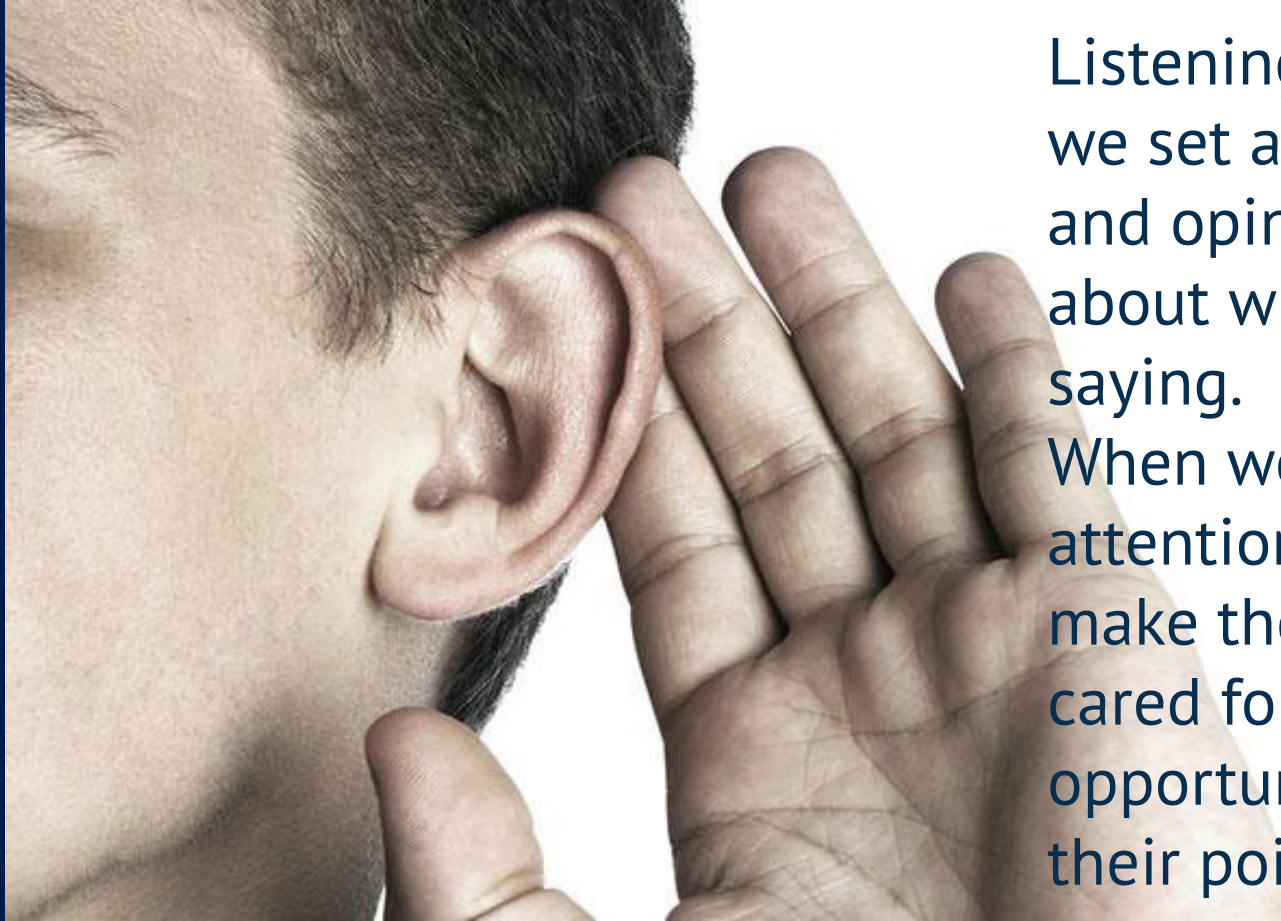
In other words, where we would ordinarily not have access to another person's thoughts, literature gives us a window into the inner thinking of other people.



LISTEN

Listening to others is a very good way of developing empathy. When we take the time to listen to the things that other people are telling us it is an easy way of understanding how they think and feel.





Listening is best achieved when we set aside our own thoughts and opinions and carefully think about what another person is saying.

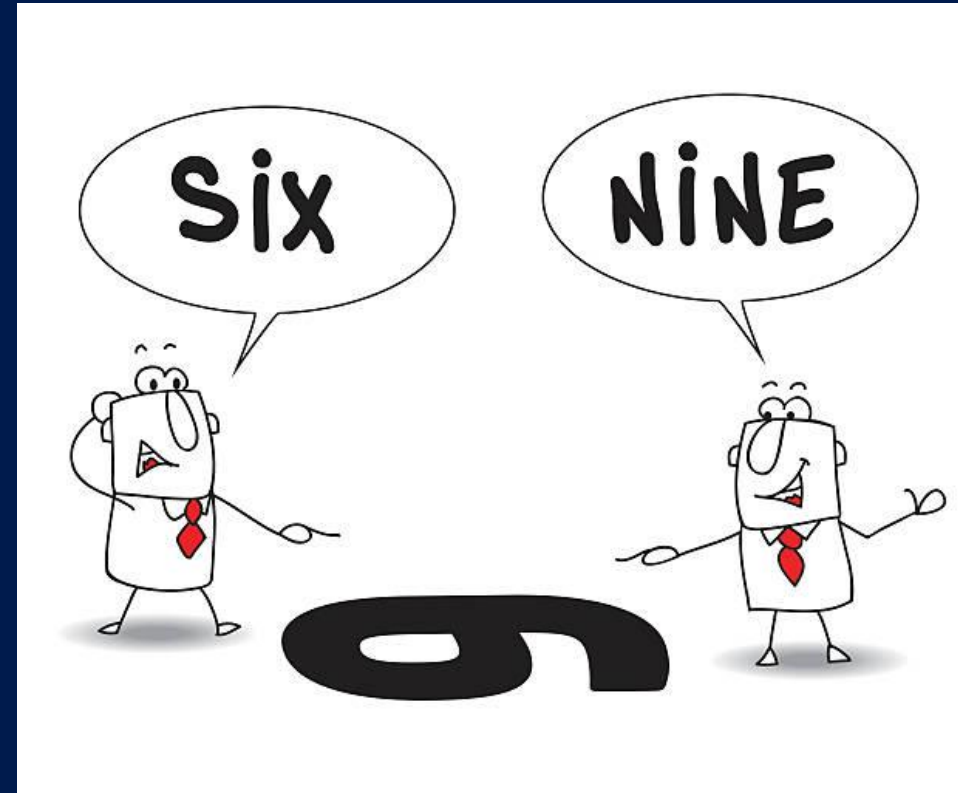
When we give our undivided attention to others we will make them feel like they are cared for and it gives us an opportunity to truly understand their point of view.

ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND PEOPLE WITH DIFFERING OPINIONS AND BELIEFS

For many, it is much easier to identify with people who are in our "in-group." In other words, it's far easier to trust or understand people who we think are like us. This type of thinking can be inhibiting in a diverse workplace, or it may suppress compassionate empathy for those outside of our own communities.



To challenge this type of thinking, it's important to take the time to understand people who are different. To expand empathy, a person might have to challenge pre-conceived notions and biases and consider another person's point of view.



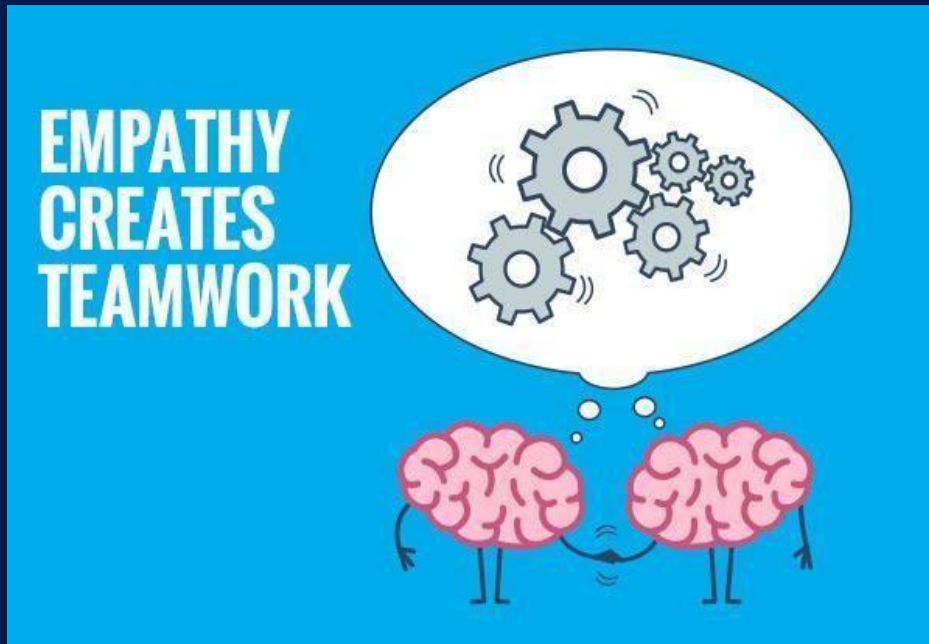


This can also be achieved by people widening their circle and becoming friends with people they might not ordinarily spend time with. They may be surprised to find that they have more in common than they first believed, and it is even more likely that they will broaden their ability for empathy.

EMPATHY IN DESIGN

- What does empathy mean to you?
- Do you know the difference between empathy and sympathy?
- How can we apply empathy in design?

Learning about Problems through Empathy



Empathy is the centrepiece of a human-centred design process.

- The Empathise mode is the work you do to understand people, within the context of your design challenge.
- It is your effort to understand the way they do things and why, their physical and emotional needs, how they think about world, and what is meaningful to them.

Learning about Problems through Empathy: Why Emphasise?

- As a design thinker, the problems you are trying to solve are rarely your own, they are those of a particular group of people.
- Observing what people do and how they interact with their environment gives you clues about what they think and feel.
- It also helps you learn about what they need.
- These insights give you direction to create innovative solutions.
- The best solutions come out of the best insights into human behaviour.

Learning about Problems through Empathy:

Why Emphatise?

- Engaging with people directly reveals a tremendous amount about the way they think and the values they hold.
- Sometimes these thoughts and values are not obvious to the people who hold them, and a good conversation can surprise both the designer and the subject by the unanticipated insights that are revealed.
- The stories that people tell and the things that people say they do, even if they are different from what they actually do, are strong indicators of their deeply held beliefs about the way the world is.

Learning about Problems through Empathy: Why Emphasise?

- Good designs are built on a solid understanding of these beliefs and values.
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- Good designs are built on a solid understanding of these beliefs and values.



How To Emphasise

- View users and their behaviour in the context of their lives.
- As much as possible do observations in relevant contexts in addition to interviews.
- Some of the most powerful realisations come from noticing a disconnect between what someone says and what he/she does.
- Others come from a work-around someone has created which may be very surprising to you as the designer, but he/she may not even think to mention in conversation.

observe  it

ENGAGE

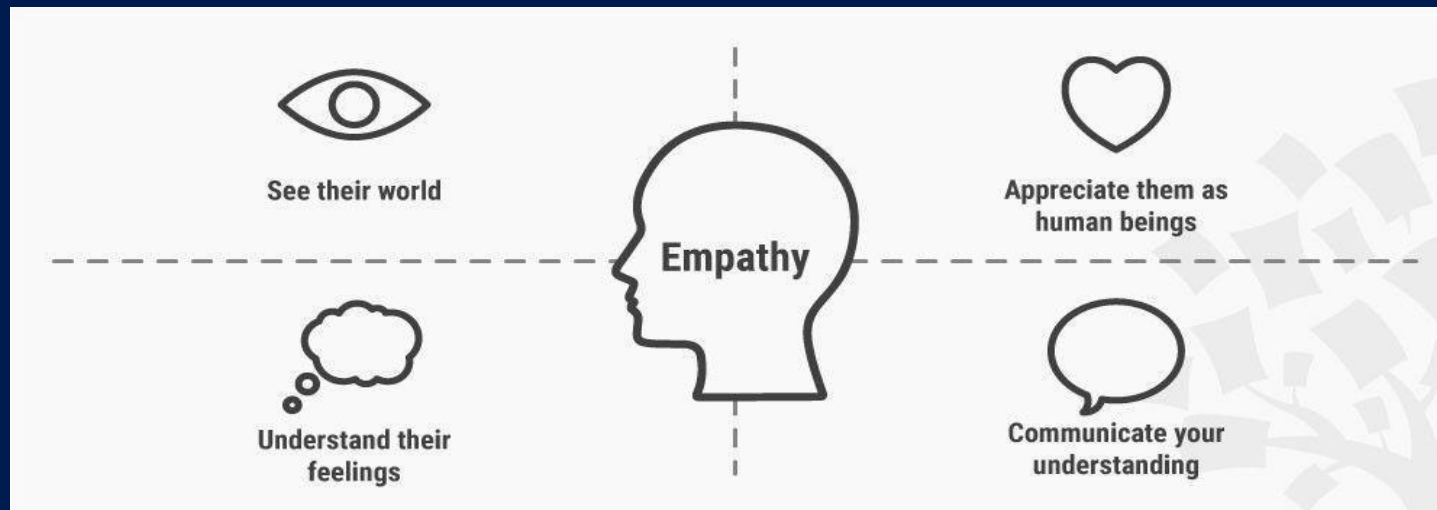
- Sometimes we call this technique "interviewing" but it should really feel more like a conversation.
- Prepare some questions you would like to ask, but expect to let the conversation deviate from them.
- Keep the conversation only loosely bounded. Elicit stories from the people you talk to, and always ask "Why?" to uncover deeper meaning.
- Engagement can come through both short "intercept" encounters and longer scheduled conversations.



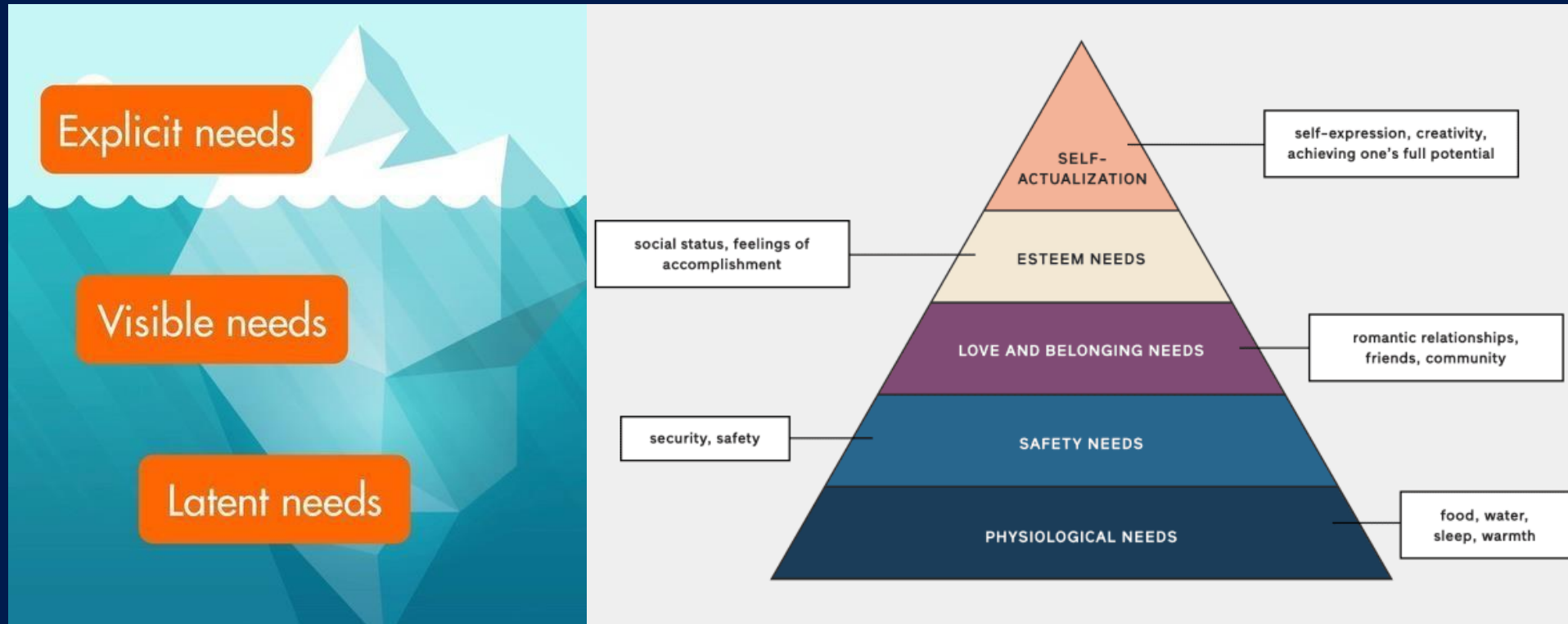
- Certainly you can, and should, combine observation and engagement.
- Ask someone to show you how they complete a task.
- Have them physically go through the steps, and talk you through why they are doing what they do.
- Ask them to vocalise what's going through their mind as they perform a task or interact with an object.
- Have a conversation in the context of someone's home or workplace, so many stories are embodied in artefacts.
- Use the environment to prompt deeper questions.

Find Inspiration from the Environment and Learn How to Identify Problems

- **Empathy** is the first step in **design** thinking because it is a skill that allows us to understand and share the same feelings that others feel. Through **empathy**, we are able to put ourselves in other people's shoes and connect with how they might be feeling about their problem, circumstance, or situation.



Discovering explicit and latent needs



UNDERSTANDING EMPATHY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAJ6jDoePyY>



If you have any questions, you can email me at:

idzuan.othman@apu.edu.my.

You can also book a consultation with me or send me a message through
Microsoft Teams